

*Stereo-plates.*—The number of stereo-plates cast during the year was 47,628, of which 4,219 were nickel-plated, the weight being 39,051 lb. The output over the last six years is shown in the accompanying table :—

NUMBER OF STEREO-PLATES CAST

Year.			Ordinary.	Nickel-plated.	Total.	Weight of Metal.
						lb.
1944-45	..	..	54,238	891	55,129	34,830
1945-46	..	..	53,241	1,377	54,618	37,021
1946-47	..	..	48,597	3,163	51,760	32,156
1947-48	..	..	40,515	3,462	43,977	31,017
1948-49	..	..	48,362	5,207	53,569	37,675
1949-50	..	..	43,409	4,219	47,628	39,051

*Rubber Stamps.*—The number of rubber stamps made was 20,967. The details set out in the table appended show the output of this section over the last six years :—

Year.			Number of Stamps.	Year.			Number of Stamps.
1944-45	..	..	13,466	1947-48	..	..	12,325
1945-46	..	..	21,507	1948-49	..	..	15,291
1946-47	..	..	24,567	1949-50	..	..	20,967

*Railway Tickets.*—The number of tickets printed was 7,409,035, the largest number printed in one month being 713,952 in November, 1949.

*Photo-litho and Process Engraving Branch.*—The output from this branch during the last six years is shown in the table set out below :—

Year.			Number of Maps, Plans, and Diagrams.	Number of Process Blocks.	Number of Muxtex Plates.
1944-45	..	..	237	3,111	..
1945-46	..	..	372	2,649	..
1946-47	..	..	453	2,433	..
1947-48	..	..	405	2,903	289
1948-49	..	..	349	4,692	536
1949-50	..	..	492	4,328	440

Offset lithography continues to play an increasingly important part in the production of printed matter and great advances are being made in the development of this branch of the printing trade in Europe and the United States of America. In the Department this process is utilized principally for the production of maps, charts, and posters. There is a growing demand for this type of work, and after consultation with the Armed Services Mapping Committee and the Lands and Survey Department it has been decided to extend this branch considerably to meet the expected requirements of these two bodies over the next few years. Accordingly orders have been placed for additional cameras and offset printing presses of various sizes, together with subsidiary plant.

This equipment when installed should enable the Department to handle all the mapping work required for some years and will also provide a margin of machine time which will be available for work at present being printed by letterpress process but which is more suitable for production by offset.